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ABSTRACT

This is a progress report on the development of the Minnesota State Individually Guided Education (IGE) Network. The foreword states that the state IGE network came into being in July of 1973 in response to a need for the continuing awareness, implementation, and refinement of IGE on a statewide basis. Section 1 is an introduction which explains the purpose of the report: to determine how the IGE Network is being evaluated and what the results of that evaluation are. The procedures used to gather the data for the report are listed in section 2, while the data is presented in the third section. The fourth section lists conclusions, the major one being that, in terms of its purposes, the State IGE Network is in the process of fulfilling its major goals. Recommendations for the Leadership Committee of the State IGE Network are presented in the last section. (RC)

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A PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINNESOTA STATE ICE NETWORK 1973-75

Prepared for

the Leadership Committee

of the

Minnesota State ICE Network

Conducted by

Daniel B. Loritz

June, 1975

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U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Forword

The Minnesota Network of IGE schools was formulated in 1973 with four basic goals: (1) to develop IGE programs; (2) to develop and assist in maintaining IGE teacher education programs; (3) to provide leadership in the development of quality control for the implementation and institutionalization of IGE; and (4) to provide a liaison with the R & D Center [University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning], /I/D/E/A/ [the innovative programs branch of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation], and the National IGE League [Association for Individually Guided Education]. At the end of the 1975 fiscal year, it seemed appropriate to step back and determine the direction the Network seemed to be taking.

The organization's growth has been complex because of the diversity of educational systems involved. Their complexity mandated the examination of the Networks' growth and development by someone who was both knowledgeable of IGE as an educational change process, and aware of the nuances of the State Network itself. Mr. Daniel Loritz was selected as the process evaluator because of his diverse experience with IGE. He has functioned as a classroom teacher, a State Consultant for IGE, directed a Title III IGE project and most recently served as a building level IGE facilitator.

It is my hope that this document will clarify the function of the State Network and will provide an impetus and direction for planning and development for fiscal 1976.

Richard J. Mesenburg
State IGE Coordinator
July, 1975

I. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota State IGE Network and its participating schools with answers to two basic questions: How is the Minnesota State IGE Network being evaluated? What are the results?

It should be noted that this is a progress report. Evaluation of the State IGE Network is not complete. Consistent with the Network's philosophy of continuous educational improvement, the collecting and analysis of information about the operation and effects of the State IGE Network will continue for some time into the future.

The State IGE Network came into being in July of 1973 in response to a need for the continuing awareness, implementation and refinement of IGE on a state-wide basis. The Minnesota State IGE Network, at that time, became part of a national network of IGE agencies supported by funds from the Sears Roebuck Foundation and the National Institute of Education thrcugh the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning.

Individually Guided Education is a system for bringing about educational improvement. It is based on research conducted by /I/D/E/A/, an affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation and the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning. IGE is, in a sense, an intervention strategy where agencies such as the Minnestoa Department of Education attempt to bring about educational improvement in a number of schools. Utilizing this intervention strategy, the Minnesota Department of Education is trying to bring about significant educational improvement without adding to the size, complexity, or personnel of the current system. This intervention strategy is based on the following assumptions:

1. The optimal unit for educational change is the individual school.

2. The belief system of the school is critical both to the understanding and to the affecting of educational improvement.

   The belief system held by the individuals who compose the staff of the school greatly influence the performance of the school. Their collective action helps determine what the school does or does not do.

   If every school becomes aware of its students' needs and becomes motivated to doing a good job for those students, then a system to force change on the schools who are changing themselves is not needed.

3. Each school needs a process by which it can deal effectively with its own problems and affect its own change.

   Since schools do change over the years, then they ought to be able to change under their own power. Therefore, you accept the idea that schools can change themselves if the conditions are right (the conditions are that change has an inner and outer structure).

4. There must be some external system to support the school in its efforts to change.

   Because the schools' efforts to change themselves usually encounter social and educational constraints, there must be some kind of external institution (a league, network, etc.) which is in no way concerned with making the system efficient, but exists only to help the becoming of the school that wants to change itself.

5. Schools are more willing to take risks when they view their environment as "supportive".

   The external institution has to be dedicated solely to supporting the school that wants to change itself. To truly effect change you must help the school become more aware of its own needs for growth, development and survival.

Presently there are 14 states which have implemented state-wide IGE networks. The first of these networks began in the fall of 1972. These fourteen networks are attempting to influence schools by "linking" agencies who are utilizing IGE and the league strategy. The state networks recognize that the "linking" strategy will take several years to develop. In view of this, this progress report is an attempt to answer the question, "Is the Minnesota State IGE Network achieving its purposes at this point in time?" The answer will be one of degree, providing the State Network with data that may be used as a guide to future action.

This report should not be viewed as an evaluation of the Minnesota Network of IGE schools but as a report on the progress of educational improvement. This report should be considered as one source of information for making decisions about the future direction and continuous improvement of the State Network. On this basis you are invited to read this report and respond with comments, suggestions, or questions regarding any aspect of the State Network's progress.

II. Procedures

During May and June of 1975, data was collected to determine the progress of the Minnesota State IGE Network. The progress report plan was developed by the writer and the Leadership Committee of the State Network. The plan called for the collection of data from several sources which included the examination of all State Network records (planning documents, agendas and minutes of meetings, budgets, etc.) and interviews with Network representatives and participating school personnel. The data used in this progress report included:

- The initial proposal for a State IGE League (April, 1973).
- Agendas and minutes of all State Network meetings for 1973-1975.
- The Goals and Objectives of the Minnesota Network of IGE Schools (August, 1973).
- Mid-year and final reports to the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center and the Sears Roebuck Foundation (1973-1975).
- All correspondence pertaining to the development and expansion of the Minnesota State Network of IGE Schools (1973-1975).
- Interviews with the leadership committee representatives.
- Attendance at Network meetings.

III. Presentation of Data

A. Procedures for Determining the Need for a State-Wide IGE Network:

In 1970, the Minnesota Department of Education and Southwest Minnesota State College each established and began working with a group of elementary schools called Leagues of Cooperating Schools.

The State Department effort was supported, in part, during the first two years by a grant from the U. S. Office of Education administered by the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, providing support for a full-time IGE consultant. Beginning in the 1972-1973 school year, the State Department provided a state-funded elementary generalist position as a one-half time IGE coordinator position and a one-half time elementary coordinator's position, thus, assuring continuing support for IGE at the State Department level. Southwest Minnesota State College implementation plans were supported through E.S.E.A. Title III funding from 1971 to 1974. During this time, Southwest Minnesota State College worked in conjunction with the Southwest and West Central Educational Service Area.

At the end of the 1972-1973 school year, there were five Leagues of Cooperating Schools functioning in Minnesota. Three were working with the Department of Education and two with the Southwest and West Central Educational Service Area and Southwest Minnesota State College. It appeared that if there was going to be further implementation and refinement of IGE on a state-wide basis, some type of state-wide network would need to be established. Further impetus was given to this idea, based on a report prepared by the Minnesota Citizen's League (November, 1972) in which it was stated that some type of agency should be established to help schools improve their organizational patterns, decision-making and problem solving capabilities and evaluation techniques.

In February of 1973, a meeting was held at the request of State IGE principals to discuss the possibility of establishing some type of State IGE League or Network to coordinate currently functioning leagues.

From that meeting a proposal for the formation of the Minnesota State IGE Network was prepared and a planning committee was selected to explore funding possibilities. The planning committee contacted the Sears Roebuck Foundation, which was, at that, time funding a project with the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center for the expansion of the IGE

concept. Also, the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center was receiving further implementation monies from the National Institute of Education for the establishment of state-wide networks.

B. Initial Planning for the State IGE Network:

The first planning meeting for the State IGE Network was held on July 12, 1973. During this meeting it was indicated that monies could be obtained in the amount of $2,500 each from the Sears Roebuck Foundation and from the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center. The State Department was selected to become the fiscal agent for the grant.

An ad hoc subcommittee was established to determine the initial goals and representation of the State Network. A second planning meeting was held on September 17, 1973, and at that time the Minnesota State IGE Network was officially established.

C. Implementation of the Minnesota State IGE Network:

The first State IGE Network meeting was held on October 15, 1973. Initial membership of the leadership committee was 14, composed of teachers, principals, superintendents, teacher education representatives, regional educational service area representatives, and the state education agency representatives.

D. Operation of the State IGE Network, 1973-1974:

1. Number of Network Meetings:

1973-1974
No. of Meetings - 9
Hours - 48
Average length of meetings - 5.3 hours
Average attendance - 62%

1974-1975
No. of Meetings - 7
Hours - 36
Average length of meetings - 5 hours
Average attendance - 60%

2. Analysis of Network Agenda Items, 1973-1975:

In examining the agendas and minutes of the Network over the past two years, it appears that items that were brought before the Network came from a number of sources and fell into a number of different categories. In an attempt to differentiate the agenda items in a meaningful way, they will be divided into the following categories:

a. Informational reports.
b. Discussion areas.
c. Proposals for funding.
d. Ad hoc committee reports.
e. In-service activities.
f. Items pertaining to the maintenance of the Network.

1973-1974 Agenda Items:

a. Informational Reports:

(1) Information on the formation of the Association for Individually Guided Education.
(2) /I/D/E/A/ questionnaires.
(3) Bylaws of the Association for Individually Guided Education.

b. Discussion Areas:

(1) Goals and objectives of the State Network.
(2) Reorganization of the State Network.
(3) Agreements and commitment from league schools to the State Network.
(4) National IGE Conference.
(5) League in-service activities.
(6) Decision-making procedures for the Leadership Committee.
(7) Relationship toother professional organizations.
(8) Endorsement of the Developing Skills for IGE workshop.
(9) Discussion of teacher competencies for IGE.

c. Proposals for Funding:

(1) Teacher Visitation - Twin Cities League I.
(2) A Handbook on the Teacher Advisor - Twin Cities League II.
(3) An Educational Smorgasbord - Northern League.

d. Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

(1) Goals and Objectives Committee.

e. In-service Activities:

(1) Planning and report on Minnesota State-Wide IGE Principals' Meeting - October, 1974.
(2) Update on league in-service activities.
(3) Planning for Principal-Unit Leader Workshop for new schools - Spring, 1974.

(4) Identification of college summer school courses related to IGE.
(5) Discussion and planning of Awareness Conferences for people new to the IGE concept.
(6) One week training sessions for IGE facilitators.
(7) One week training sessions for college educators.

f. Items Pertaining to the Maintenance of the Network:

(1) University of Wisconsin and Sears Roebuck Foundation updates and reports.
(2) Budget information.
(3) Goals and objectives of the Network.
(4) Reorganization of the Network.
(5) Decision-making procedures for the Leadership Committee.
Future meeting dates.

1974-1975 Agenda Items:

a. Informational Reports:

(1) IGM workshops.
(2) League reports.
(3) College update.
(4) "We Agree" workshop.
(5) AIGE activities.
(6) Request for identification of resource people from the Sears Roebuck Foundation.
(7) Announcement on /I/D/E/A/ questionnaires.
(8) Announcement on Developing Skills Workshop.
(9) Request from /I/D/E/A/ for research information.
(10) Announcement on University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center Workshops.
(11) Announcement and update on individually guided reading program.
(12) Announcement on AIGE clearinghouse.
(13) Announcement on flight to Denver for National IGE Conference.
(14) Report on Chicago Leadership meeting.
(15) Announcement on /I/D/E/A/ secondary facilitators' training.

b. Discussion Areas:

(1) Goals and objectives of the Network.
(2) Chicago Leadership Committee Conference.
(3) Failure of regional Awareness Conferences.
(4) Assessment of local league fees.

(5) Memorandum of Agreement with local schools and State Network.
(6) Resolution to AIGE on bylaws.
(7) Local needs assessment reports.
(8) Future of the Network.
(9) Funding of local league personnel to the National IGE Conference.
(10) National Planning Workshop.
(11) Reorganization.
(12) Evaluation of the State Network.

c. Proposals for Funding:

(1) Members of local leagues to the 1975 National IGE Conference.

d. Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

(1) Goals and Objectives Committee.

e. In-service Activities:

(1) Planning for advanced Principal-Unit Leader Workshop - Spring, 1975.
(2) Local league reports on in-service activities.
(3) Identification of college summer schools courses related to IGE.

f. Items Pertaining to the Maintenance of the Network:

(1) University of Wisconsin and Sears Roebuck Foundation updates and reports.
(2) Budgetary information.
(3) Future of the Network.
(4) Decision-making procedures.
(5) Proposed reorganization.

3. Cost:

The figures indicated below pertain only to the dollar amounts expended from the Sears Roebuck and the University of Wisconsin grants.

a. 1973-1974:

	Budgeted	Expended
	$5000.00	$3475.04

Major Areas:

	Budgeted	Expended
1. Transport./Exp. Leader. Comm.	$2500.00	$1713.10

3a. Cost (cont.):

	Budgeted	Expended
2. State-wide In-service Activ.	$ 700.00	$ 553.94
3. Funds to Local Leagues	$1500.00	$1146.00

b. 1974-1975:

Budgeted	Expended
$5000.00 (plus 1524.96 carry-over from 73-74)	$4031.73

Major Areas:

	Budgeted	Expended
1. Transport./Exp. Leader. Comm.	$2000.00	$1840.00
2. State-wide In-service Activ.	$1000.00	$ 750.00
3. Funds to Local Leagues	$1500.00	$1441.73

E. Major Outcomes of the State Network, 1973-1975:

1. Major Outcomes, 1973-1974:

a. Planning of a state-wide principals' meeting.

b. Involvement of the state colleges in the State IGE Network.

c. Planning of Awareness and Implementation Workshops for new schools.

d. Planning of an Advanced Principal-Unit Leader Workshop for existing schools.

e. Development of a philosophy and goals statement.

f. Funding of local league projects.

g. Debate on issues of current importance to the State IGE effort.

(1) Evaluation of IGE programs.
(2) In-service activities.
(3) Maintenance activities.
(4) State Department involvement.
(5) Awareness and implementation activities.
(6) Future of the Network.
(7) College involvement.

2. Major Outcomes, 1974-1975:

a. Establishment of three state colleges through a clinical in-service as intermediate agencies for the implementation of IGE.

b. Planning for an Advanced Principal-Unit Leader Workshop - Spring, 1975.

c. Planning for Awareness and Implementation Workshops for new schools.

d. Identification of college summer school courses and programs related to IGE.

e. Debate on issues of current importance to the State IGE effort.

(1) League fees.
(2) Evaluation of IGE programs.
(3) Failure of overview conferences.
(4) Relationship of local leagues to the State Network.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

Any conclusion drawn from this study must relate directly to the purposes of the State IGE Network. Its major purposes are as follows:

1. To develop IGE programs on a state-wide basis.

2. To develop and assist in maintaining IGE teacher education programs.

3. To provide leadership in the development of quality control for the implementation and institutionalization of IGE.

4. To provide a liaison with the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center, /I/D/E/A/, Sears Roebuck Foundation, and the National Association for IGE.

In terms of its purposes, my overall conclusion would be that the State Network is in the process of fulfilling its major goals.

The State Network is attempting to reach out and create environments to give Minnesota schools every chance to grow and become the best schools that they can be. However the reach is a difficult one. Changing education is a difficult and complex task. Improving instruction requires more than just tinkering with a single aspect of the curriculum here or a rejuggling of classroom structure there. Educational improvement must change an entire school, district, and state organization. It has implications for teacher training, curriculum, school organization and school system governance. If these changes do not come about, the change program for the individual school will probably have difficulty in being successful.

With regard to purpose 1, "To develop IGE program on a state-wide basis", the State Network has increased the number of agencies facilitating IGE from two to five in the past two years. Because of this increase, the three leagues that were functioning without a facilitator now have one. The State Network has also planned and partially funded state-wide in-service activities for experienced principals and Learning Community/Unit Leaders.

In terms of purpose 2, "To develop and assist in maintaining IGE teacher education programs", the State Network has partially funded teacher education personnel from six state colleges to attend workshops on developing undergraduate and graduate programs for IGE. The Network is also acting as a liaison for the Sears Roebuck Teacher Education Project for field testing their materials.

The Network is currently utilizing the experience of Southwest Minnesota State College (Southwest State has been preparing teachers at the undergraduate level for three years in IGE concepts) in identifying ideas and concepts for other state colleges in the development of their programs.

Purpose 3, "To provide leadership in the development of quality control for the implementation and institutionalization of IGE", is a natural outgrowth for the State Network. Because of its broad representation, the Network has become the forum for debate on matters that will be critical to the future of IGE in Minnesota. If IGE, as an educational improvement program, is ever to become a viable force in Minnesota's educational framework, it will have to be the result of organizations such as the State Network.

Finally, in reviewing purpose four, "To provide a liaison with the R & D Center, /I/D/E/A/, and the National AIGE", the State Network appears to be obtaining and disseminating important information concerning the continuing refinement of IGE concepts.

On the basis of the data collected as part of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The development of the Minnesota State IGE Network was based on diagnosed needs.

2. During the initial planning process for the State Network, efforts were made to involve educators from the classroom level through the Department of Education.

3. Implementation of the State Network occurred smoothly, based on the efforts of the planning committee.

4. The State Network adequately informed the local schools and leagues on the development of the Network. This was accomplished through correspondence with each of the local league schools and attendance at HUB committee meetings.

5. The Network's efforts to provide broad representation on its leadership committee should be noted. A committee composed of teachers, principals, superintendents, college professors, regional educational service area representatives, and State Department of Education representatives provides a broad prospective and stance in solving problems. This representation, however, does create problems in the area of decision-making for the Network.

6. The Network's attempts to establish a Memorandum of Agreement between itself and the local schools seems to be contrary to the Network's acting as a support agency for the local leagues. This has occurred partly because three of the local leagues have been operating without a facilitator until the winter of 1974-1975.

7. The Network has begun to function as a "linking" agency between the local leagues. Network meetings have occurred regularly, the topics were appropriate, and there was opportunity for input, interaction and feedback. Although it appears that many of the agenda items contributed mostly to the maintenance of the Network, this would seem to be a natural outgrowth of any developing organization.

8. The Network has been continuously involved in a self-improvement concept. It has undertaken a revision of its initial goals and objectives and has prepared a statement of philosophy and goals. At the end of the 1973-1974 school year it reorganized to better represent and coordinate the local leagues. This study is a result of the continued efforts to improve the Network activities for the 1975-1976 school year.

9. From the analysis of the agenda items and attendance at Network meetings, it appears that a considerable number of announcement and information items are contained in each meeting. These items could probably be more effectively handled through a Network newsletter to all facilitators or local schools.

10. It is the writer's judgment that too much time is being spent on items that are only relevant to the maintenance of the Network. An average attendance of 61% at the Leadership Committee Meetings may be an indicator of this.

11. The establishment of three colleges during the 1974-1975 school year as implementation agencies for IGE is a strong step forward in the continued implementation and expansion of IGE in Minnesota.

12. Establishing state colleges as intermediate agencies for the implementation and maintenance of IGE is only one step the colleges must take in the continued institutionalization of the IGE concepts. Considerable attention must be given to helping the colleges develop undergraduate and graduate programs for IGE personnel.

13. The failure of five Awareness Conferences on IGE seems to indicate that the Network is not addresssing itself to the current problems facing local schools. These include:

    a. A decline in interest in "innovation".
    b. Reduced monies for local education.
    c. The rise of teachers' unions and principals' unions.
    d. A decrease in interest in "schools" by the public.

    The data on the planning of Awareness and Implementation Workshops indicates that the Network needs to address itself to the question of how to help local leagues redesign their awareness and implementation plans.

14. The Network needs to address itself to strengthening the individual leagues it now has operating. The funding of local league projects during the first two years of the Network is a strong step forward in this direction.

15. The development of the Minnesota State IGE Network represents a real effort to improve the quality of "educational life" for the schools in Minnesota. The program development has not been without its problems or concerns, but whatever they may be, the representatives of the Network leadership committee have learned something of the dynamics of educational change, the difficulties of trying to change themselves, and of how best to proceed in the future.

The reader of this report must not view this as an evaluation of the State IGE Network. It must be viewed as a process for determining the kinds of decisions that have to be made and selecting, collecting and interpreting the information needed to make those decisions. It must be remembered that no system of improving education can be regarded as final. New research and new technology will tend to render any innovation obsolete as time goes on. Therefore, the State IGE Network is attempting to build in a capacity for self-improvement, a process for evaluating current practices, and a procedure for departing from them when conditions require. Through this the State IGE Network will attempt to make continuous improvement a way of life for the schools in Minnesota.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that the Leadership Committee of the State IGE Network review the following recommendations and formulate plans for their implementation, as deemed appropriate.

1. The size of the leadership committee should be reduced to include the State IGE Coordinator, each league facilitator, and one local school representative from each league. Perhaps a rotating basis of teachers, principals, and superintendents (or other central office staff) from the local leagues might be helpful. This group should meet on a quarterly basis to review and react to the direction of IGE on a state-wide basis.

2. A training session or retreat for the Leadership Committee should be planned for the early fall which would center on the league concept as a method for school improvement. Considerable time should be spent reviewing the Study of Education Change and School Improvement conducted by the /I/D/E/A/ Research Division under the direction of John Goodlad. Also this session should include specific training for the league facilitator in utilizing this intervention strategy and a study of current problems facing public education in terms of innovation and change.

3. Ad hoc committees should be considered as an alternative for involving league representatives in target problems facing the Network. These committees would be established and funded by the Leadership Committee to explore and examine current issues and problems (e.g., teacher education programs, revised awareness and implementation strategies, etc.).

4. The State Network should explore the possibility of establishing leagues of "innovative" schools. These schools do not necessarily have to be IGE schools, just schools who want to improve.

5. The State Network should make a considerable effort during the 1975-1976 school year to inform the State Board of Education, the state superintendents, the State School Board Associations, the state teachers' associations, and the Legislature of its intent in the league intervention strategy.

6. The State Network Leadership Committee should consider that the majority of its budget expenditures for the 1975-1976 school year be made directly to the local leagues in an effort to strengthen them.